PELPUP NEWS

SUMMER EDITION 1971 Number 21

Produced by PELPOP

Pelham Puppets

Marlborough, Wiltshire

'Letter from Pelpop'

MARLBOROUGH.
AUGUST, 1971.

Dear Pelpups,

It is hard to realise the nights are drawing in while you are still on your Summer holidays. As the evenings get darker, the theatre lights come on—puppet time is on its way—get thinking puppet wise and prepare for a show!

Running a specialist magazine like this with no advertisements to support costs, gets more and more expensive, and then add insult to injury, look at the postage—50% increase! There would be quite a shout if we put our prices up 50%! However, in an attempt to keep our subscription rates down I am going to cut out those unnecessary postcards which only say thank you for your plays, etc. Of course, I will answer your queries and requests for information, except those who say, "Where is my magazine?", when you should know that it is seldom out until the end of August. All those sending photographs or plays who want them returned please send stamped addressed envelopes.

You would hardly think it, but this is quite our busiest time of the year. Exports to America are leaping up and so are those to Germany and France. Everywhere children are beginning to look on puppets from a better angle—a puppet is not a toy, it is an actor. I think when children buy puppets—well Pelham Puppets—they have an introduction into puppetry and that is what turns the puppet from a toy into an actor. As soon as you start manipulating the puppet correctly, you are on the way—but only on the way, never are you there—"there" is never reached and that is what makes puppetry the exciting thing it is. It takes you into the furthest realms of your imagination, always with new horizons ahead, always you can do better because you learn and then you add to your present knowledge and next time will benefit. Puppetry is progressive.

Now for the results of the Competitions. The Playwriting competition—the first prize (two puppets) goes to Tracy and Dane Ronvik, U.S.A., for "Intruder in the Forest". Second prize (one puppet) goes to J. B. Monilaws, St. Albans, for "Witch's Brew", and also one puppet to V. Joslyn for "Ack-zsckolosvzxyn".

One puppet each goes to the four photographic entries.

Will you all let me know which puppets you would like—I am sorry no ventriloquial puppets may be chosen.

The Group Activity Contest was won by Michael Leydon, and well deserved because of the way it was presented. It was written out beautifully in an exercise book with drawings and pictures stuck in. Well done—please let me know which three puppets you would like. The next two I have chosen must share second prize, so that is two puppets to each group. The groups are "The Wednesday Night Kids" led by Jane Albright, and "The Silver Horse Marionettes" led by Catherine Edwards. If space permits I will include an adult group from S. Dakota—I hope to hear that there are more of these.

I wonder if we shall ever be able to say that puppetry in this country has as great a following as it has in Poland and Czechoslovakia. In Czechoslovakia there are 3,000 ensembles, these are amateur groups formed in factories, schools and clubs. The interesting factor is that the majority of the performers are teenage to adult and their shows are correspondingly suited to an adult audience.

Now I would like to tell you about our own puppet theatre. It all stemmed from Errol Ofman, Charl du Plessis and Diane Jones—Errol from Rhodesia and the other two from South Africa. They wrote from South Africa asking if I could get them work permits to get jobs in the factory. Pressure of work being so great, I had no fear from that angle. They came over in May and have since worked hard mainly helping to paint heads. Soon Errol was inspiring me to start up a puppet theatre, so we set to and listed all the pieces of equipment and timber required. The stage was constructed right across the end of a large hut which is 75 ft. x 25 ft. The proscenium arch is 8 ft. wide and the stage 12 ft. deep. A bridge goes across the centre of the stage so puppets can be worked in front and behind the bridge and the puppet strings are about 6 ft. long. There is a dead area beneath the bridge as far as string puppets are concerned so we have a large trap-door in this area from which rod or glove puppets can be worked. There are draw curtains across the front and back of the bridge, as well as several different kinds of curtains that draw across the back cloth. When these are all drawn back a white linen sheet stretched out on the back frame offers a splendid screen for back projection of films or shadow puppetry. In the very front there are two sets of curtains, one is the ordinary draw type and the other a drop curtain, which is gathered into folds.

Lighting is elaborate and capable of almost any effects. Apart from the normal front lights there are a number of large spot lights and a whole battery of 150 watt spot lights below floor level at the back. These are wired in so that red, blue and greens are independently controlled on dimmer switches so that an infinite variety of colours can be blended in and out on to the backcloth.

Perhaps the most expensive equipment of the whole outfit was the stereo record player, amplifier and speakers. If you can afford it stereo sound is a "must"—it is like colour TV. is to black and white. Another piece of electrical equipment which is exciting and well worth having is an ultra violet tube worked in conjunction with the special ultra violet paint and dress material. *Warning*—do be sure and shield this tube from your eyes, it can affect your

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eyes without you realising it. Errol Ofman is describing how he uses this fascinating technique in this issue.

The "Condition of Sale" notice now printed on every box relates only to firms who specialise in coin machines. It prohibits the use of our puppets in coin operated machines. We have, however, negotiated with a firm and given them exclusive rights to reproduce an animated set piece involving fifteen puppets. You will probably see one if you go in an amusement arcade at the seaside. It does not affect anyone using our puppets in the way intended—that is in a puppet theatre, whether you do it on a commercial basis or not.

The picture on the front cover shows an animated unit which we made specially for Zambia. The puppets in the foreground are the Makishi Dancers copied exactly in every detail from photographs supplied. It took a long time to make but the finished result was worth it. All the heads had to be specially modelled. I had a job at first to get the hands of the three drummers to beat their drums, but this was achieved by tying a string across from hand to hand so that the one going up pulled the other hand on to the drum.

Last year we had Sherry Smith from Pa., U.S.A., working in the factory for three months. She became expert at handling my 7 ft. Bimbo. This year we have Dan Tamulonis from Pottsville working here during his Summer vacation. You will find an interesting article from him about the Puppeteers of America.

Good luck with your shows and make them better and better and then still better.

Good Luck,

Pelpop

For the benefit of new members, the subscription of 15p entitles you to a badge and a year's subscription to the magazine—i.e., two magazines, one on joining, that is the current copy, and the next issue. They come out Aug./Sept. and December. If you do not renew you are still a member but you will not receive a magazine.

If you join for five years you will receive ten copies in all.

If on receiving this magazine it is your second copy and you want to continue receiving magazines please renew your subscription on this form as soon as possible.

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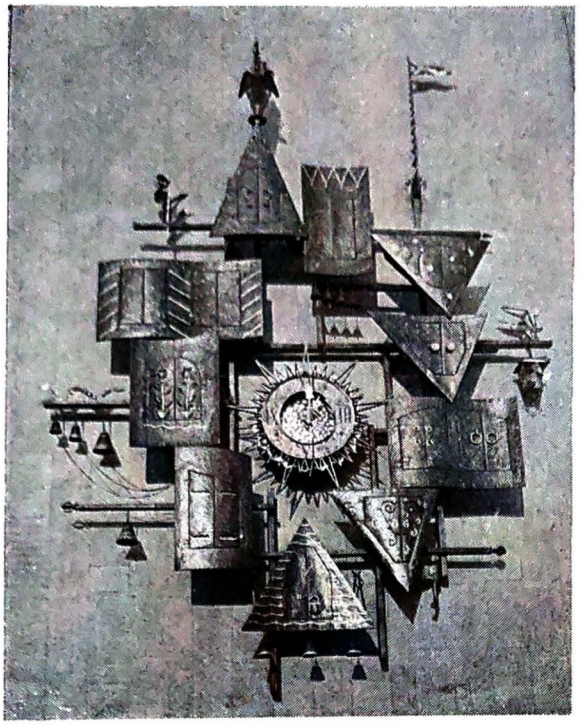


The Biggest Puppet Theatre in the World by Jan Bussell

Just before Christmas I went to Russia and saw the biggest puppet theatre in the world. It is in the centre of Moscow and it is run by the famous Russian Puppeteer, Sergei Obrastsov. It is a huge building in a wide street, and it was originally built as an Opera House on the same sort of scale as Drury Lane or Covent Garden in London, but it was never used. When it was offered to Obrastsov he decided that this outside must be made interesting, so he built an enormous clock on it, which is almost a puppet show in itself. When the hour strikes there are numerous little doors that open and figures come out and move round ringing bells, and there is a large cock at the top which turns to and fro. It is so big that to see it all working you really need to stand on the other side of the street.

Of course the inside was much too big for a puppet show, and so Obrastsov decided to cut it in half and make two theatres of it with the stages back to back. One seats about 250 and is used mainly for children's shows, and the other about 500 and is used for adult performances. Besides this there are workshops for making puppets, workshops and paint shops for the scenery, a wardrobe department where costumes and wigs are made, rehearsal stages and storerooms and offices, and a greenroom for the performers to rest in. There is a spacious bar and foyer for refreshments, even an aviary and an aquarium! And best of all there is a splendid museum with puppets from all over the world displayed in glass cases. Some of these puppets are several hundred years old, and others are quite modern. I was very pleased to find Muffin there amongst the puppets from England.

But it is really about the theatre itself that I want to tell you. The auditorium is panelled all round and all these panels can open to reveal puppets. So that you may suddenly find yourself sitting next to a large ostrich! Quite often in a play a panel will open and some puppet will shout something from the back of the theatre to the other puppets on the stage; or if a puppet has to go on a journey he may appear in a new scene in some panel at the side. You never quite know what is going to happen next! Especially as there are projectors all round the ceiling and when these are all switched on they can transform the whole auditorium. In one scene I saw we suddenly discovered ourselves in a fair ground, with things happening all round us. And the sound too can be made to come from all parts. Back stage there is a large control table of buttons. You can put on a tape recording of the sound of a barking dog and then by running your finger over the buttons make it sound as though the dog has run all round the theatre, as the many different loudspeakers come on and off. The sound of birds and of aeroplanes is made to come from the roof, and the effect of, say, horses' hooves is easily made to sound as if they are approaching from the distance.

Continued on page 13

Black Theatre

By ERROL OFMAN

The modern form of this type of theatre would appear to be based on a very early form of theatre wherein the whole stage was covered in a flat black material or paint and all puppets and props. were white. Magical effects could thus be produced, e.g. by dropping a black bag over a puppet or prop. which would make it disappear. Lifting the bag would, of course, make the puppet appear.

A further development was brought about by Georges Lafaye whose puppets appear to be suspended in mid-air. This he does by holding the puppets in a narrow beam of light which is produced by two banks of light (one above and one below the puppets) which throw this narrow "trench" of light. (Fig. 1).

A more recent form of black theatre is that as used by the "Black Theatre of Prague". Here the puppets are painted with a fluorescent paint which glows very brightly when exposed to ultra violet light. Because ultra violet light is invisible to the human eye the rest of the stage will appear black. The puppeteers, dressed in black, are again invisible, especially against a black curtain. This form opens up a large field for specialized movement as the puppeteer or puppeteers have direct contact with the "puppets" thus producing far more definite and precise movements and therefore more complicated movements.

Earlier I put the word "puppets" in inverted commas. This is because here one can let one's imagination run wild and any sort of figure could be used. That, is, either flat, two-dimensional cut-outs or three-dimensional figures with depth.

Here there is really a lot of scope for marrying music and movement. (See article by Jane Phillips in Winter 1970 Magazine for details.) You can use realistic figures of either humans, animals or fantasy-type characters (i.e. story book characters); or completely abstract shapes and forms representing the music. Remember to keep your eyes open for all sorts of incidents in real life which could be used as a little musical playlet or ballet. There are so many little incidents which happen all around us both in the animal and human worlds which make wonderful themes for U.V. acts.

One can also use this paint for transformation effects as there are forms of this paint which are invisible under ordinary light but are very highly fluorescent under U.V. light. For example, if one had a scene of, say, an indoor palace room, one could paint a ghostly forest scene over this and then by dimming the stage lights (after putting on the U.V. light) the other scene will appear.

Another, but rather gruesome, idea is to have a skeleton figure painted over an ordinary puppet (for example, a wizard); then by suddenly putting the U.V. light on, this figure will appear superimposed over the wizard. Then by dimming the stage lights the wizard will disappear and there will be the skeleton. (See Fig. 2.)

Instead of loose clothes one could put a large cloak over the wizard (which can easily be dropped) and have the clothes quite fitted so that you can paint the skeleton more easily. While on the spooky subject here are some ideas for some ghostly characters. (See Fig. 3.)

Now to more pleasant things. U.V. light is also very useful for a fairy or woodland scene. Characters such as butterflies, dancing flowers, bees, toadstools, fairies and elves always go down well. These paints have a beautiful translucent glowing appearance which make them ideal for underwater scenes. Sea-horses, fishes, octopi, crabs, shells and snails and all kinds of plants can be used. To start off with, a length of white chiffon can be held across the opening and "rustled" backwards and forwards to give the impression of water. The chiffon will glow a bright blue colour. If the chiffon is then lifted slowly, still being rustled, it gives the appearance of going underwater. Also you can make luminous bubbles by adding a special luminous additive to the water used. (See Fig. 4 for some ideas for characters.)

Once production begins in the theatre I will take some photographs which we will include in the next magazine and which may help you.

Well, I hope this will be of some help to you and remember this is a relative new form of puppetry and so almost anything goes. Use your imaginations and you will really be able to entertain your audiences. Good luck to you all!

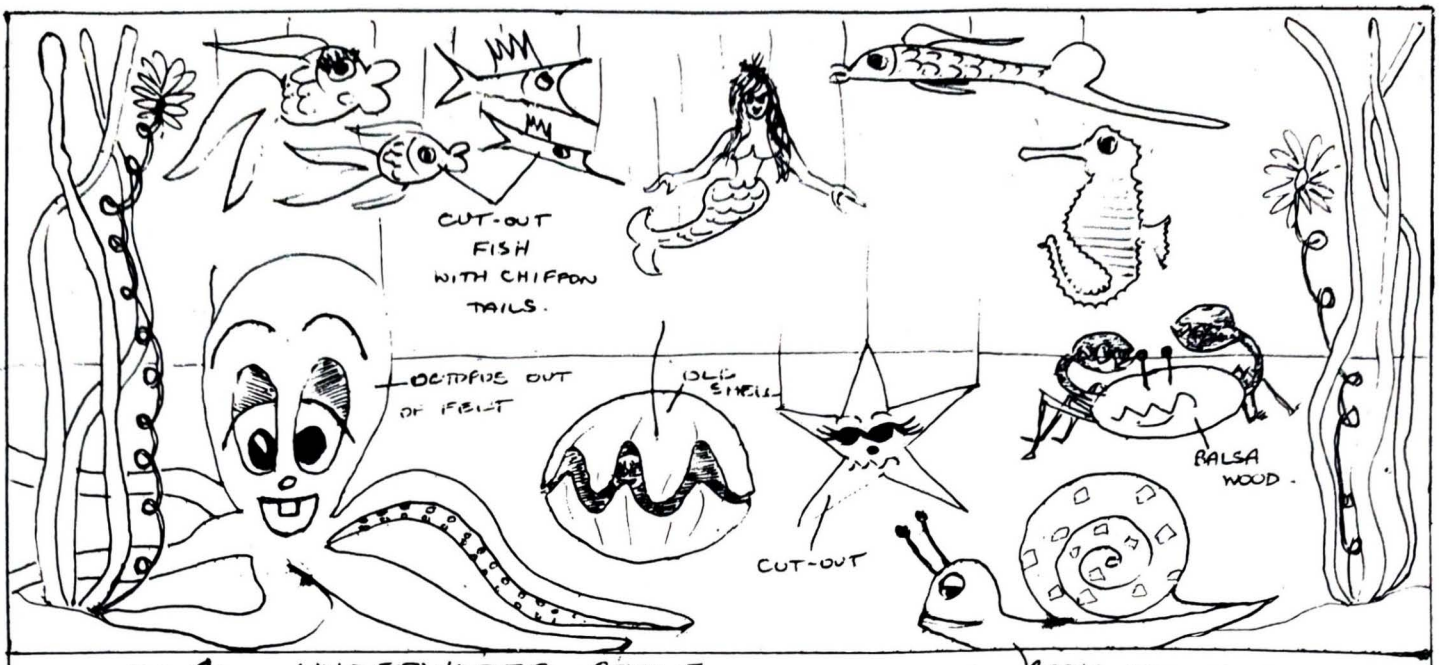


FIG 4 UNDERWATER SCENE.

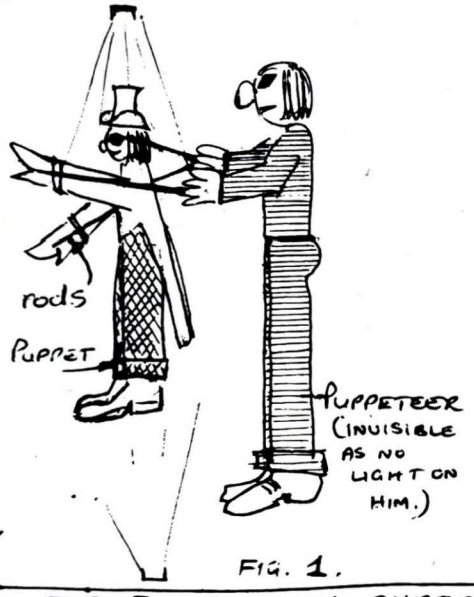


FIG. 1.

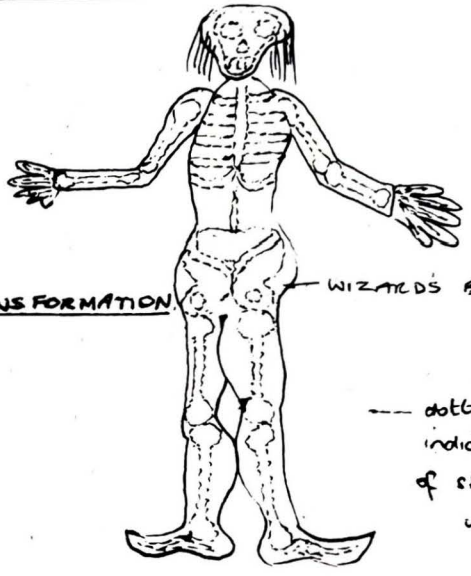
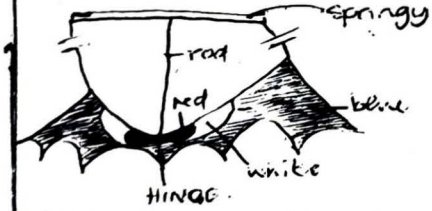


FIG. 2 TRANSFORMATION

--- dotted lines indicate position of skeleton on wizard's body.

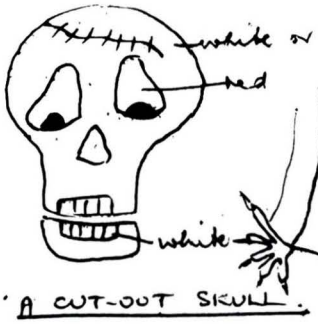
FIG. 3 GHOSTLY CHARACTERS.



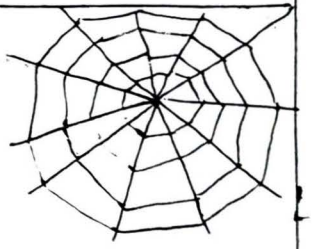
BY PRESSING THE PLASTIC ROD AT THE ENDS IT WOULD FLAP QUITE EASILY.

A BAT.

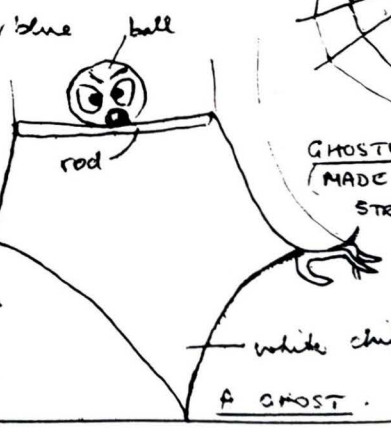
(A NUMBER OF THESE COULD BE STRUNG ON ONE CONTROL.)



A CUT-OUT SKULL.



GHOSTLY SPIDERWEB (MADE FROM WHITE STRING OR COTTON)

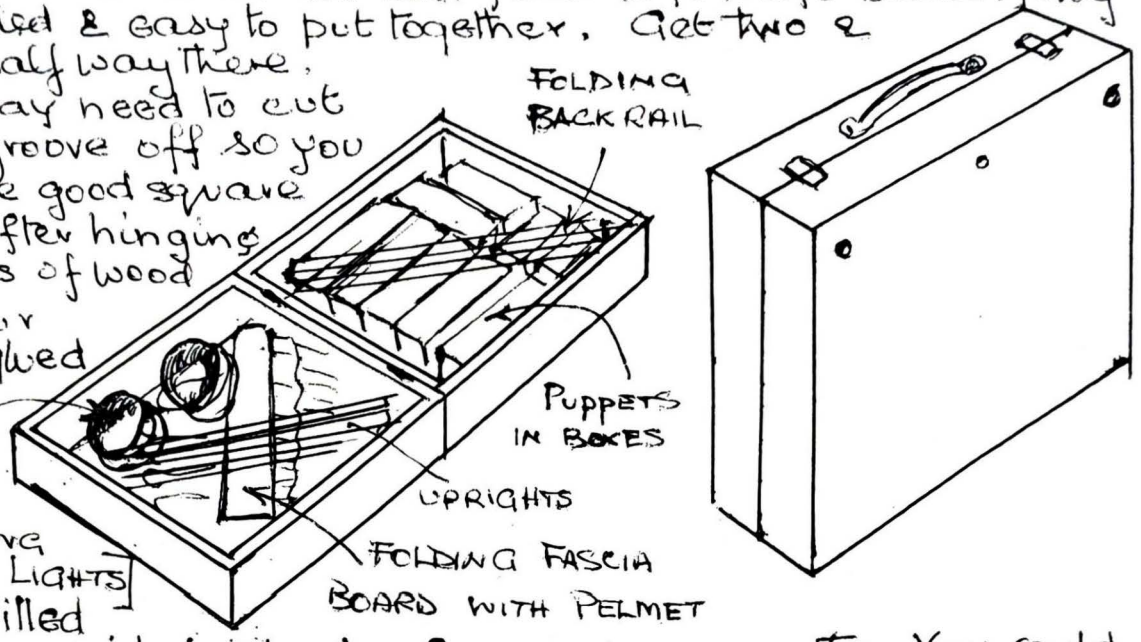


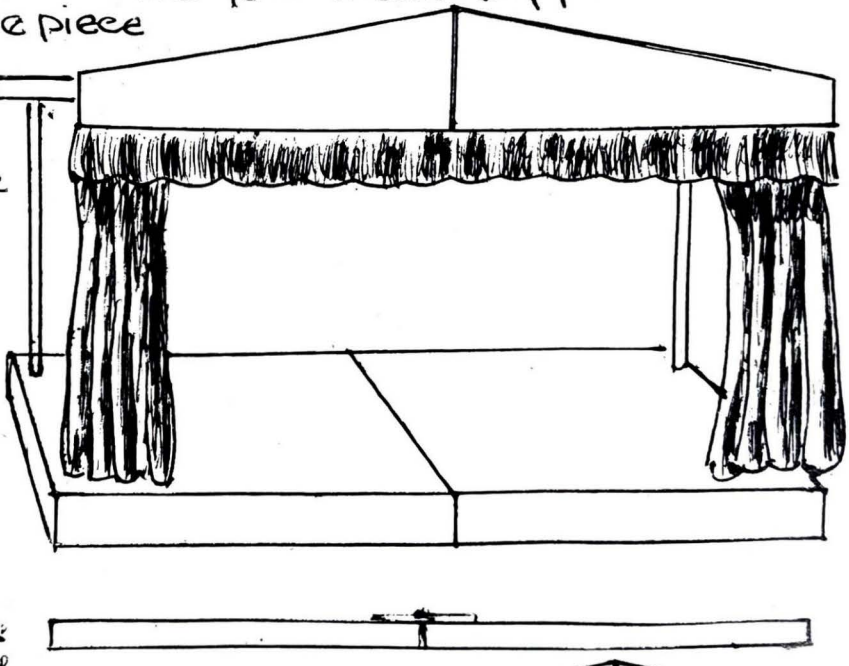
A GHOST.

A PORTABLE STAGE

This stage folds up like a suitcase & everything packs away into it – including the puppets. The first thing is to make a good strong box, saw it in two, then hinge them to form a folding box. Dovetailing is difficult so one way to buy a ready made box is to look for suitable size drawers. You can find 2 ft x 2 ft beautifully dovetailed & easy to put together. Get two & you've half way there.

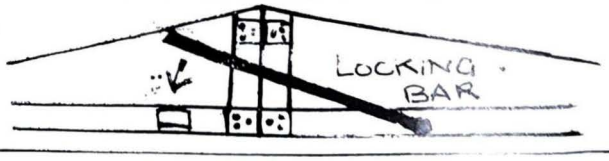
You may need to cut the groove off so you have good square edges. After hinging put blocks of wood in all four corners, glued & nailed so that holes [Two Folding Bedside Lights] may be drilled from the other side to take the four main supports. You could leave the front in one piece then it would mean carrying it separately. If you do attempt to hinge it, see dia, note metal locking bar that swings across hinges into a metal clip or swings to right when folded.





The curtain rail bolts together in middle so be sure curtains are partly open before folding.

I hope the diagrams explain the rest of the details. Its a handy box if made correctly.



WIMBLEDON WILLIE

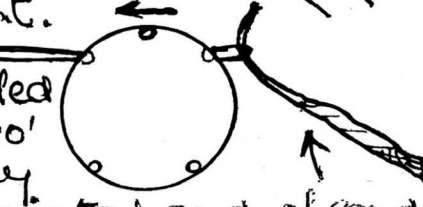
Here is a simple puppet to make provided you can get hold of two old tennis balls, four wooden balls & a length of thick soft braided cord – anything up to ¼" thick but it must be soft cotton type or limbs won't bend properly. Ask in your local furnishing shop for "piping" — that might do.

First drill or make with sharp end of scissors 4 holes for limbs & one for neck in one of the tennis balls.

The four wooden balls need drilling with slightly under ¼". Countersink one end of each ball.

Now take some sticky tape & roll it round end of cord & roll off into a long stiff point.

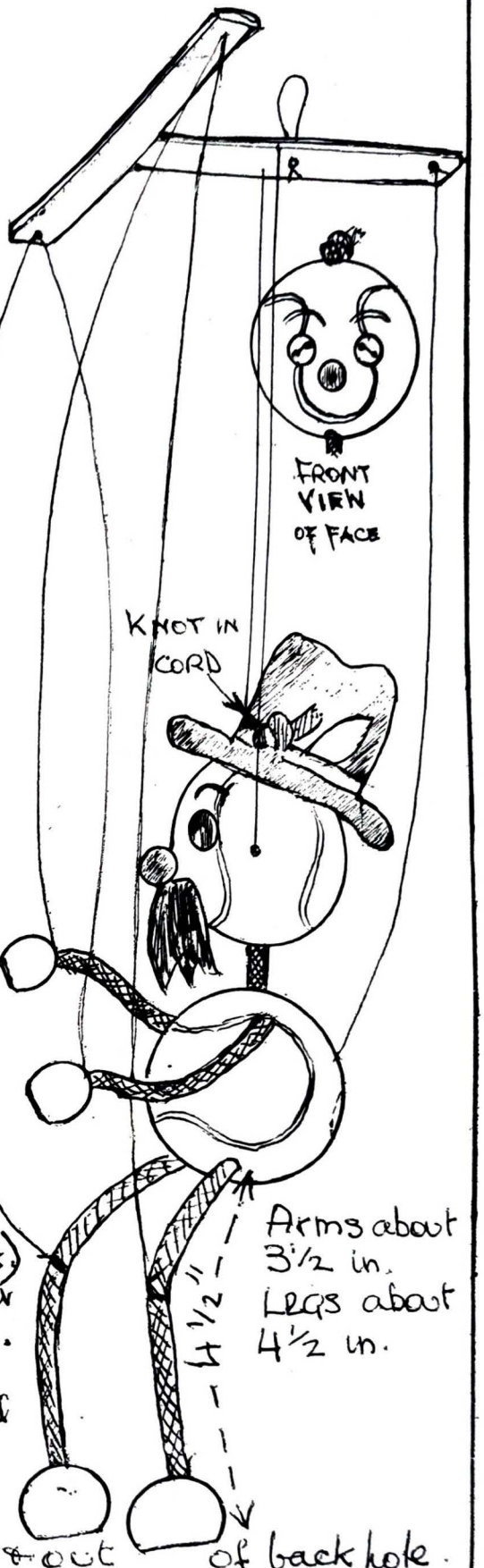
Using a piece of stiff wire doubled back — push thro' arm holes in body & draw back pointed end of cord. (First make sure you have threaded on a hand.) Either tie knot or use glue, so Draw right through until first arm is correct length. Then thread on other hand & cut cord when in position. Knot or glue to hold. Do the same for legs.



(Glue end & dab into countersink)

Now make hole in back with pointed end of scissors (go a little deeper as you have to pull a knot through this)

Push double wire through neck hole & out of back hole. & draw back pointed end of cord, tie knot at end



Continued overleaf

Continuation of "Wimbledon Willie"

and pull right through, pushing knot into body so that it comes up underneath neck hole.

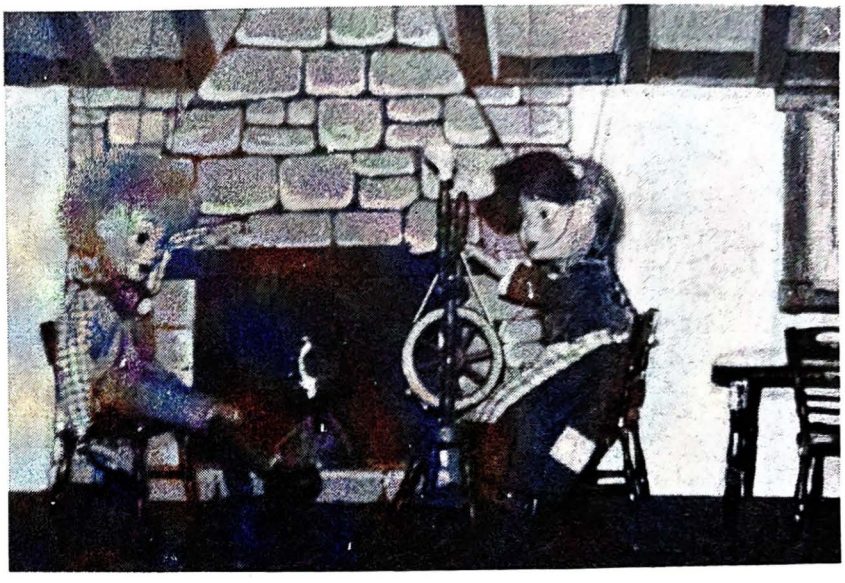
Now make holes through top and bottom of head ball. Pass double wire down and draw up cord, push head down until about $\frac{1}{2}$" of neck is left. Cut off and tie knot close down on to head. The holes through the tennis balls should grip tightly on the cord, so there is no need for further glueing or anything. Watch out for the pattern on the balls when you drill the holes. Now you want a big darning needle to stitch on two eyes (use black buttons) and another but smaller ball for nose. Eyes should be sewn on tightly passing threads right through and out at back of head where you tie the two together, while the nose can be loose to wobble. Stick on beard or whiskers and hat if you like.

When you string up, thread your darning needle and pass it right through head taking each end of string up to control, remember to cross hand strings.

You will be surprised how well he works provided you get the tension on the leg strings correct.

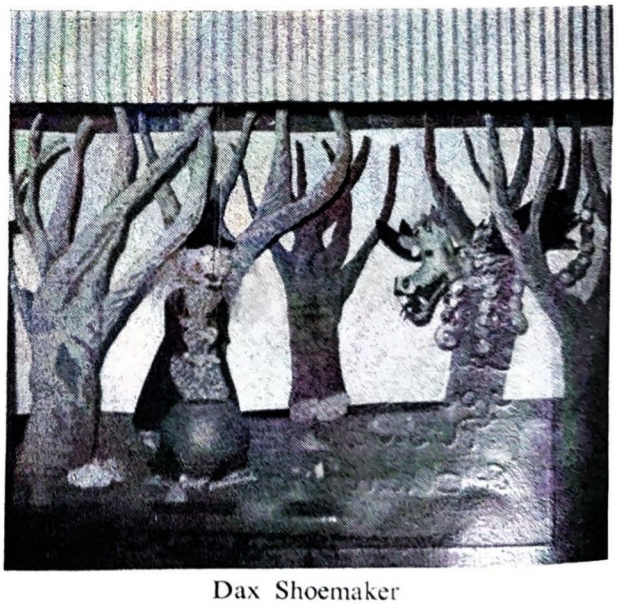
Photographic Competition

Davy Davidson



Barbara Milne

Clive Whittaker



Dax Shoemaker

Puppet Activity

"THE PELHAM PUPPETEERS" by Michael Leydon

Members of the Group—Pelham Puppeteers, St. Wilfrids High School. Michael Leydon (Leader), Ian Berriman, Peter Leydon, Colin McClusky, Susan Duckworth.

How it all started.

It all started when I saw my friend with a Pelham Puppet. She was showing it off to everybody so I decided to ask her if I could have a go. I soon got the hang of it and a crowd had gathered to see it. From then on I got Pelham Puppets for my birthday and Christmas. My brother got quite interested in the puppets and so did my friends, so I decided to make a group. My father got a puppet theatre made for me. I painted it and put up the curtains and the lights.

Our Stage

The stage itself is 30″ high, 42″ long and 15″ wide. The curtains are made of rayon silk and are light blue. They go up and down operated by a turn handle at the top left-hand corner. There is one main spotlight in the centre at the top and three footlights at the front of the stage floor. All these lights are operated by switches at the side of the stage. My friend has just recently bought a Pelham stage as well.

Our Plays and Special Effects

Plays	*Number of Puppets*	*Plays*	*Number of Puppets*
The Wizard of Oz	14	The Christmas Fairy	12
Rumplestiltskin	5	The Prince and the Dragon ..	7
The Haunted House	22	Variety Show	16
The Ghost of the West Wing ..	8	Hansel and Gretel	7
Cinderella	17	Witch?	5
White Christmas	9		

All our performances have been successful and every time we have had a large audience. I think the play that the audience enjoyed most was "The Haunted House".

Special Effects

Here are some of the special effects which were very good:—

1.—An alarm clock for a fire bell, door bell or telephone.
2.—A piece of paper tearing, looks very funny for a clown, etc.
3.—A tinfoil roll full of flour, dried coconut bits, etc., looked very effective for snow.
4.—We have used drums, banjo, paper comb, recorders, piano, tin cans, glass, etc.
5.—Flameproof cellophane (coloured) was used for coloured lights.
6.—We also made a sort of silver whirlwind out of bushy Christmas tree tinsel. This was used before a fairy came on.
7.—The footlights were flashed before a witch came on.
8.—Also for music we have used a record player and a tape recorder.

I think the most difficult play we ever performed was "Cinderella", because of the "transformation" scene. The audience was really amazed at this. For Cinderella changing from rags to her ball gown we used two puppets. For the one in rags we used the Dutch girl and for the one in the ball gown we used Mitzi in a beautiful golden dress trimmed with silver Christmas tree tinsel and wearing a crown. For the coach we used the same sort of tinsel stuck on to the coach which was made from white card. For the horse we used the foal dressed in tinsel, so all this scene was very glittery and was very effective. For the ballroom scene we put my theatre behind the Pelham Puppet theatre and took the backcloth off. This made the ballroom look very big. While everything was going on in the front stage there were people dancing in the background and some one from the audience remarked that it looked very good. Also for this play my dad had some programmes printed. We only had my friend, my brother and myself working the puppets and we only used mine and my friend's puppets.

Our group has also been to many parties, performing the puppet shows and all have been very successful. The whole group meets in my house at least once a week to discuss things. We each have a small badge with "The Pelham Puppeteers" written on it. Nearly all the neigh-

bourhood know about us and they know who to call if they are having a party. After this we decided to put an advertisement in the local *Courier*. Soon we will be doing a puppet show at a Primary School and I am sure we have had at least three people wanting us to perform at their parties.

All the scenery is made out of either wall paper or large drawing paper. This is only 2½p and fits the back of the stage perfectly. For scenes like a graveyard we use a black back cloth with white silhouettes pinned or stuck on. For side wings we used to use white cardboard panels but now we use some Waddington's games boards. They are black and look very good on the stage. We also have miniature vases, tables and chairs, and I have recently made a very effective staircase that the puppets actually walk down. I sometimes use a piece of carpet that fits on the stage floor perfectly. At each side of the stage there are two curtains. These are opened and closed by two people. This curtain prevents the audience from seeing round the sides of the stage. There is also a hollow base to the theatre to store props.

The Wednesday Night Kids

Mrs. Kenneth Albright, for Jane Albright, Club Member, 512 Teal Lake Ave.,
Negaunee, Michigan 49866, U.S.A.

We wish to enter this in your group competition. The name of our group is "The Wednesday Night Kids". Leader: Mrs. Kenneth Albright; Members: Steven, Andrea, Pamela Prusi, Nancy, Jane, Ann Albright.

We started our club when the need arose for some activity for the children while their parents were in Mid-week Service at Church. We meet in the Youth Addition and use the Pelham Puppet Stage, Bimbo, Dutch Boy, Dutch Girl, Dragon and the Foal. (We need more puppets for variety but are trying to create costumes for those we have).

We have created every act or play we have performed except one, "The Recitation" with Bimbo.

We invited our parents into our room to present our first performance. We have practiced three times over the actions of all our puppets playing the roles in "The Good Samaritan" from the Bible. Using a narrator and each child in charge of one puppet. The parents were delighted.

Since then we have created one-act situations using puppets. For instance: Dutch girl walks past a little puppy (Stuffed animal). She stops and looks at the sweet little puppy and talks to herself for she wants to pet it but is afraid of dogs. She thinks if she is kind to the puppy he will be kind to her. So she slowly walks toward the puppy, gets on her knees, slowly reaches out to pet him. She is very happy that he is kind to her too. She reasons out loud that she will be kind to her friends, parents and teachers, too.

Also, Dutch boy walks up to a stop sign. He looks and looks at it. He talks to the boys and girls and confesses that he cannot read. (Now he has a problem and the children are concerned.) He asks the children what the sign says. He talks about wasting time in school and learning very little and now he wishes he could read the sign and even his candy bar wrapper. He purposes in his heart to learn how to read and walks off talking excitedly about reading everything.

I could report more of our activities with puppets. Thank you for this opportunity to share with you.

The Silver Horse Marionettes

Our company, The Silver Horse Marionettes, was founded on the 10th October, 1970. To begin with there were five of us: Catherine, Elizabeth, Beverly, Alyson and Rosalind. Gradually we expanded and now there are eight of us: Catherine Edwards, who is the leader and artist; Elizabeth Baker, who copes with the music and most of the writing; Beverly is the treasurer; Pamela is the stage manageress (responsible for getting props. on and off stage); Rosalind, who deals with the lighting and curtains during shows; Linsie makes most of the props.; Alyson is the producer; and Jackie is the catering manageress.

Our headquarters are at 137 Oaklands Avenue, which is where Catherine and Rosalind live. We meet about every fortnight, more frequently if we have a show coming in the near future. Here we keep the theatre. The theatre was made by Mr. Edwards in 1969. It has a solid base,

a removable sky-blue back, which makes a good backcloth and is solid enough for props., etc., to be attached to it, the same applies to the wings. The proscenium arch is yellow with a triangle at the top in the centre of which is a small white horse which gives us our name.

So far we have done three shows, two at birthday parties and one for a Brownie Company. Our first show was for Graham Rendall at his birthday party on 1st February, 1971. We did two plays, "The Cat and the Cauldron" and "Caterpillar Capers" from "Plays for Pelham Puppets". The children loved it! Our next show was for Graham's younger brother Duncan, and by request we did "Caterpillar Capers" again. The Lettuces in "Caterpillar Capers" were merely loops of green sheet pulled through holes in a strip of card as the caterpiller ate them. This prop. astonished the audience. On each occasion we had named five shillings as our fee but Mrs. Rendall had very kindly given us a £1 both times.

Our third show was for a Brownie Pack in Watford. This time we did three plays, the two we have mentioned above and a new one, "The Enchanted Castle", from Book Two for Pelham Puppets. These went down very well with the Brownies. We were not expecting a fee but their Captain gave us ten shillings and would not take no for an answer!

Our next appointment is in June for the Brown Owl's son's party. We also hope to perform a variety show in aid of Oxfam soon.

Miss C. Edwards (aged 13), 137 Oaklands Avenue, Tel. Watford 20576.
Oxhey, Watford, Herts.

Continuation

Largest Puppet Theatre in world

Of course the lighting is equally elaborate, needing many technicians to supervise it, and there is closed circuit television in all the control points to give them all a clear view of the stage. The stage itself is quite elastic. The proscenium opening can be made larger or smaller at the press of a switch, and the floor is a series of lifts so that it can instantly be turned into steps or raised platforms. At its largest it will quite comfortably stage a choir of 50 humans.

Obrastsov likes very much to introduce humans, or rather masked humans, into his puppet productions. His designers are very clever at devising masks and costumes that almost turn a human actor into a puppet, so that the mixture is very effective. Of course, most of the puppets are large in themselves so that this discrepancy of size is not too great and the masks are often of animals or fantastic creatures like devils or angels.

And how many people do you think there are on the theatre staff? Three hundred and forty-five! When I think of my own puppet show which I often do with two, and never more than six—I believe the largest English company numbers fifteen—it is rather breath-taking, isn't it! But don't dispair, large numbers are not by any means everything. It is quality that really counts and what you have to say—the play. I do not want in the least to detract from the work of Obrastsov, indeed when he manipulates himself I consider him one of the finest puppeteers in the world, and the elaborate productions he puts on with his large companies are quite breath-taking. But even he cannot conjure up 345 more like him. And I still believe that English puppet manipulation—especially with string puppets—can equal any.

Dasilva Puppet Co

Britain's leading international puppetmasters are mounting another giant size spectacular of puppets under the title of "The DaSilva Treasure Island", to commence touring in December of this year.

This presentation, costing over £2,000, will be even more exciting than the highly successful "Snowhite and the Seven Musical Dwarfs" currently on tour.

With the simultaneous operation of marionettes on nine foot strings and rod puppets operated from below on the larges touring puppet stage in Europe this attraction will be the most elaborate and entertaining show for children and family audiences to ever tour the theatres of this country.

The highly original script is by Fred Barton, and the voices by West End Theatre actors of The Around Readers, directed by Martin Cort. The characters are up to half life-size, which with bold design and special lighting can be seen in the largest auditoriums without eyestrain.

Intruder in the Forest

By Tracy and Dane Ronvik

Cast: Horse, Cat, Wizard, Giant.

(*Scene opens on forest. Horse gallops in panting from stage right, followed by Cat.*)

Horse: That was a fright! (Cat *nods*).

Horse (*panting*): I—am so tired—of that Giant and—and his mean tricks!

Cat: Every bone in my body is still shaking!

Horse: Hiding behind a rock and—and jumping out at us like that . . .

Cat: And chasing after us—you left that part out!

Horse: Yes, that too.

Cat (*stretching out on ground*): I don't know *what* we're going to do. Every animal in the forest is frightened and nervous.

Horse: You never know where that Giant will jump out next. He's scaring us all!

Cat: There ought to be *someone* we could call for a suggestion.

Horse: Ought to be, yes. But there isn't!

Cat (*jumps up*): Or is there?

Horse: What do you mean?

Cat: Why, of course! Why didn't I think of this before?

Horse: Think of WHAT before?

Cat: Z-O . . . Zo, the Wizard!

Horse: Would he really help us?

Cat: Certainly, besides, I have a way with words. I'll get him to help us.

Horse (*doubtfully*): Doesn't he live far from here?

Cat: Oh, only a short bit of travel. Besides, we'll have each other for company.

Horse: Well, if we're to go we'd best hurry. The sun will set soon.

Cat: Come along, then.

(*Cat and Horse set off, walking in place, while forest scenery behind them moves by to simulate travel.*)

Cat: I'm awfully tired . . . I hope it isn't too much farther.

Horse: I'm not tired a bit. Why don't you clamber up on my back and ride for a time?

Cat: Oh, thank you! (*Climbs up and they start off again.*) My, this is so much nicer. Are you sure you aren't tired?

Horse: Quite sure. . . . Isn't that a cave ahead?

Cat (*pointing*): Over there? Yes—yes, I think it is!

Horse: I do hope that Zo has a solution. I'm awfully tired of those tricks the Giant keeps playing on us!

Cat: We all are!

(*Gradually the set has been darkening.*)

Cat: You can let me down here. (*Horse does so.*) It's so dark and cold—I almost expect the Giant to spring out and scare us!

Horse (*looking in one direction and then another*): I wonder where Zo is?

Cat: Zo? Zo? Where are you?

Horse: I doubt if he can hear you.

Cat (*louder*): ZO! ZO!

(*Spot light shines on figure of Zo, as he enters in air and calmly assumes sitting position above ground.*)

Zo: Pardon me, you needn't shout. My hearing is in fine condition.

Horse: We've come to ask your help—you see, in our forest there is this. . . .

Zo: Excuse me, won't you have a seat? (*Pause, animals make no move.*) Well! Oh, how silly of me! I'd forgotten you have no powers at present. Well, we shall take care of that. (*Raises arm and animals raise above ground.*) There, isn't that better? Now what is your business?

Cat: We have a problem in our forest. You see there is this Giant—

Horse: A very large one, too!

Cat: Yes, that's right. Well, we have this large Giant in our forest and he scares us all.

Horse: He plays tricks on us all the time!

Cat: He has frightened the animals in the forest out of their wits!

Horse: Why just today he jumped out at us and chased us through the fern beds along the brook. We only escaped when our friend the Squirrel saw us in trouble and hid us in his home!

Cat: It was such a fright!

Horse (*sigh*): It isn't easy sharing our forest with a Giant.

Zo: Did you say YOUR forest?

Horse: Yes. That Giant is a frightening intruder!

Zo: Hmmm. Did it ever occur to you that perhaps YOU are the intruders?

(*Cat and Horse drop to ground, taken aback.*)

Cat: Why, what ever do you mean?

Horse: US, intruders? Why that's ridiculous!

Zo: Ah, not so . . . observe.

(*Book floats in, lands, cover opens.*)

Zo: This is a book—

Cat: So it is.

Zo: It is called "The History of Giants", correct?

Horse (*nods*): Yes, go on.

Zo: You see this page here? It tells a story that would interest you.

Cat: Well, what is this story about?

Zo: It tells how several giants lived quite peacefully in a little forest.

Horse: The forest that we live in?

Zo: Yes, precisely. Well, one giant left the forest and went North. Another left and went South. Then one went East and another West. Well, since there were but five giants, only one stayed in the peaceful forest where he had grown up.

Cat: Do you mean that HE is the Giant that frightens us? The one that stayed?

Zo: Yes, he was the one that stayed, but actually, you animals frighten *him*.

Horse: WHAT?

Zo: It wasn't long before animals from neighbouring lands wandered into the Giant's forest and made their homes there.

Horse: And the animals . . . they were US, am I right?

Zo: Yes. You animals all made your homes in the Giant's forest and the poor Giant began to worry that you animals would not like him and would chase him out of the forest that was originally his home. And so he has tried to scare you away, but not one animal has left.

Horse: But we would like him if he wouldn't play frightful tricks on us!

Cat: Yes, that's just it!

(*Heavey footsteps heard offstage.*)

Horse: Oh, no! That's the Giant!

Cat: He's come to scare us away!

Horse: Where can we hide?

Zo: Hush, I am sure he is willing to share his forest peacefully if you will only tell him that you will not have all the animals scare *him* away!

(*Footsteps closer. Offstage voice of Giant.*) ZO? IS

THAT YOU?

(*Giant enters, Cat and Horse hide behind Zo. Giant sniffs ground and turns to audience*): DO YOU SMELL A CAT? DO YOU SMELL A HORSE? WIZARD—WHAT IS THAT I SEE BEHIND YOUR BACK? IS IT A CAT? OR IS IT A HORSE?

Zo (*calmly*): It could be either. A Cat *and* a Horse came to me on business.

GIANT: BUSINESS?

Zo: That is correct. It seems that a certain Giant has been frightening the animals in the forest in which they live. He has chased these animals, here as well as their friends.

GIANT: Friends? I do not call animals who try to chase away the keeper of their forest, friends!

Zo: Have they actually tried to chase you away?

GIANT: Well . . . no.

Zo: And so how do you know they wish to do so?

GIANT: Well . . . I . . . I . . . don't exactly.

Zo: Ah, it is as I thought. I think it high time you had a discussion with the Cat and the Horse. (*Steps aside with sweep of hand.*) Gentlemen. . . .

CAT: G . . . good day, G . . . Giant.

HORSE: G . . . good day.

GIANT: Well! What have you to say?

CAT (*gaining courage*): That . . . that we're tired of having you play frightening tricks on us! All of us!

HORSE (*nodding*): That's right!

GIANT: And I am tired of thinking you are all going to throw me out of the forest . . . I'm . . . sorry if I scared you a little.

HORSE: Well, that's okay. I mean after all—it is YOUR forest.

CAT: That's right.

GIANT: Well, not any longer, it isn't! From now on, it shall be called OUR forest . . . agreed? (*Extends hand.*)

CAT and HORSE: Agreed! (*Shake hands with Giant as curtain closes.*)

THE END

The Witch's Brew—

By J. B. MONILAWS

Characters: ADAB MOREFUN, a Wizard; CADAB MOREFUN, a Witch; IZZY MOREFUN, their adopted Daughter; MR. WALTERS.

A modern room converted to a witch's kitchen, in the centre of the stage a cauldron over a fire. Enter Adab followed by Cadab.

ADAB: Ah! I should, I suppose, be carrying you over the threshold, after all, we are newly wed. The wedding service went well, didn't it? I do hope we don't get a divorce, like my great grandfather did.

CADAB: I like the cake best. And I do hope one of us doesn't die. I wonder where Izzy is? She is being very slow.

ADAB: I should think it is her broom, it looks like it needs a service. (*A whistling sound is heard.*)

CADAB: That must be her now. (*Both walk to the door.*)

(*Enter Izzy.*)

ADAB: Where have you been you . . . ?

IZZY (*breathlessly*): My broom was not flying at all well.

ADAB: Never mind, I'll take it to the garage to be serviced tomorrow morning. (*Pause.*) It must be time for our supper now, but first I will have my medicine. Cadab could you make it?

CADAB: Of course. (*They all go over to the cauldron.*) Now let me see. . . . Ah, yes, that's it. Erm Adab-cadab winging-po, all ingredients into the pot you go. (*Ingredients fly down into the pot. Cadab looks at mixture.*) There we are Adab, it's all ready for you.

ADAB (*bends over cauldron and puts his head in it at the same time making a lot of noise about drinking the medicine.*): Ah, that's better. (*Pause.*) When is that ball we are going to?

CADAB: Tomorrow night at the full moon.

IZZY: Oh, can I come, please.

ADAB: No, you're not old enough.

IZZY: Pleeease.

CADAB: No (*firmly*). Any how you don't know what horrid humans you might meet there, and your magic isn't strong enough to hurt them.

IZZY: Then can I go to evening magic classes?

ADAB: Yes, only if you pay for them though.

IZZY: Yes, all right. But can I go to the ball next year?

CADAB: I suppose you must. But what about supper?

SCENE II

A silent road.

Enter Mr. Walters, humming to himself.

MR. W.: Ha-hum, tee tum, etc. Full moon and Hallow'een, I wonder if I shall see any ghosts or witches. (*Two Witches fly across stage.*) Oh, help, witches. What shall I do? I know, I'll hide behind this bush.

Off stage.

ADAB: Oow!

CADAB: Help, ouch!

ADAB: My broom fell from the sky.

CADAB: Same with mine.

ADAB: Izzy said something about her broom not working: they all need a service. Oh, well!

On stage

MR. W.: Oh, dear, what shall I do? I can't get caught and turned into a tadpole. Oh heelp!

Enter A. and C.

ADAB (*sighs*): I suppose we shall have to walk the rest of the way.

CADAB: Thank goodness I have some blister healing brew. (*Pause in which Mr. W. hiccups.*)

ADAB: Goodness me. . . .

CADAB: What was that?

ADAB: Not an animal.

CADAB: Behind that bush.

ADAB: I'll move it. Voom Moove (*Bush slides away revealing Mr. W.*)

MR. W. (*Intone*): Amen. (*He puts his hands reverently together.*)

ADAB: I'll fix that spy!

MR. W.: No, no, please have mercy. (*He slowly rises into the air.*)

ADAB: Now for some fun. Adabcadab, etc. (*Magic words. Mr. W. starts to move around in the air very violently. Then he suddenly falls to the ground.*) That should serve him right.

CADAB: Look, he has fainted!

ADAB: So what. (*He kicks Mr. W.*)

MR. W.: Grr. Do you know who I am? I am the head wizard who lost his memory, but the shock you gave me has made me regain it. You shall now pay for teasing me.

ADAB, CADAB: No, please have mercy on us. (*There is a flash of light, A. and C. fall to the ground.*)

IZZY (*off stage*): There are Mummy and Daddy's

brooms, they must be walking now. (*Enter.*) Oh, dear. (*Looking at A. and C.*) Poor Mummy and Daddy they are dead.

MR. W.: Were you going to the ball with them. (*Points to A. and C.*)

IZZY: Er, well, yes.

MR. W.: Would you like to come with me?

IZZY (*eagerly*): Yes, please. I like you, what's your name?

MR. W.: I'm John Walters, what is yours?

IZZY: Izzy Morefun, it's a horrid name I think. (*Aside*), It's that wretched script writer.

MR. W.: Er . . . will you marry me?

IZZY (*pause*): Yes. Now to the ball!

(*Exeant.*)

THE END

Ackzsckolosvzxyn

By V. JOSLYN

Characters: WITCH, TYROLEAN GIRL (Martha); GEPETTO (Witch's assistant); CAT.

SCENE 1

(*Scene is in Witch's cave. Witch is stirring a large black pot. Her assistant is dozing in a chair.*)

WITCH: It just *isn't* fair! Why should I be the ugly one, and my sister, Martha, be pretty?

CHARLIE: Mmmm . . . Whassat?

WITCH: I said it isn't fair that I'm so ugly and my sister so pretty.

CHARLIE (*snore*).

WITCH: CHARLIE!

CHARLIE (*jumps up*): Yes, your honour? (*Bows to Witch.*)

WITCH: Go to Redrose Cottage and bring my sister here. I need some of her beauty.

CHARLIE: Why should I do all your dirty work?

WITCH: What did you say?

CHARLIE: Er, yes, your honour. (*Bow, exit.*)

WITCH: That Charlie, I will really have to get another assistant one day.

CURTAIN

SCENE 2

(*Martha's cottage; Charlie and Martha are sitting own.*)

MARTHA: You say that Gertrude, my evil, old sisters wants me. Why?

CHARLIE: I don't know. Something about her having your beauty.

MARTHA: Give *her* my beauty! She must be mad. Any way, people can't give away their beauty.

CHARLIE: Gertrude's spells *always* work.

MARTHA: Not if I interfere. I'll make her drink some Ackzsckolosvzxyn before she starts the spell. I don't suppose you know what Ackzsckolosvzxyn is?

CHARLIE: Of *course* I do. Everyone knows what Akclosvik . . Ackloshvz . . Ackoshvikin, or whatever it's called, is.

MARTHA: What?

CHARLIE: "Well . . . yes, it's . . . it's . . .

MARTHA: You don't know. As a matter of fact it's a liquid that makes people say the wrong spell. Only I know where you get it from.

CHARLIE: Huh! I bet it doesn't work. (*Stand.*) Well, come if you're coming.

MARTHA: I'm coming. (*Exit Charlie and Martha.*)

CURTAIN

SCENE 3

(*In Witch's cave once more. Charlie has just arrived with Martha.*)

WITCH: So you're back. About time. How *are* you Martha *dear*?

MARTHA: As healthy as ever, thank you. You seem to be all right. What exactly are you going to do with me?

WITCH: That remains to be seen. First I have to prepare the potion. Charlie, did you put in the beetle's tongue last night?

CHARLIE: Yes, your honour, and the dragonfly's wing, *and* the elephant's toe-nail.

WITCH: Good! Now I am ready to start.

MARTHA: Before you begin would you like a drink?

WITCH: Has it got 32¾ milligrams of vitamins in it?

MARTHA: Er . . . yes, I should think so.

WITCH: It better have. I will soon know if it hasn't. (*Take bottle from Martha; drink.*) Only 32½! It tasted awful. Perhaps now you will allow me to begin? Stand over there Martha. (*Points to a corner.*) (*Martha goes where she points.*)

WITCH: Stand quite still, quite . . . (*whisper*) quite still (*Stir pot.*)

Eye of an eagle,
Wing of a bat,
Keep Martha pretty,
Turn me to a cat.

(*Cloud of smoke screens puppets. Witch changes to a cat.*)

CAT: Meeow!

MARTHA: Look what's happened, Charlie!

CHARLIE: Good! Now I can go and get a job as a dustman. I've *always* wanted to be a dustman, and would have been long ago if it wasn't for *her*. (*Exit.*)

MARTHA (*strokes cat*): You'd better come home with me. I'll find you a saucer of milk.

CAT: Meeow!

MARTHA: Come along Gertrude. I must say I like you much better as a cat than as a witch. (*Exit Martha and Cat.*)

CURTAIN

THE END

The Play-writing Competition is always open. Plays received will be filed and judged just before making up the next magazine. Please remember these plays must be original. Try and get as much action into them as possible. That is what makes a good puppet play. Clear writing and layout will be considered in judging the winner. Please be sure to put your name and address at the top of your play. Two puppets are awarded for first prize and one puppet for second prize. Vent puppets may not be included in your choice.

Puppeteers of America—Festival '70

For quite a few years the Puppeteers of America have been holding Puppet Festivals. The most recent one, last August in Storrs, Connecticut, resulted in the largest and most successful one in the history of the National Festivals.

There was a generous supply of public performances, highlighted by the magnificent production of "The Love for Three Oranges", a full-scale production of the Prokofiev opera (with most of the *operaticism* neatly and discreetly cut) by the Drama Department of the University of Connecticut. It was largely a marionette production, however, human pantomine, black (U.V.) light and shadow puppetry were also used. The audience thoroughly and critically enjoyed it. Also performing was Dick Meyers, who presented his fascinating and immensely enjoyable "Dick Whittington" and "Beauty and the Beast". Bob Brown, puppeteer in residence at the Smithstonian Institute in Washington, D.C., presented "Hansel and Gretel". The Popinjay Puppets of Ohio were there with a charming musical production of "The Patchwork Girl of Oz", and the Pickwick Puppet Theatre gave a monumental performance of "The Arabian Nights", with a melange of all the well-known stories narrated by a beautiful life-size Scheherazade and an equally handsome Sultan. A grande finale to the week's performances was "The Bread and Puppet Theatre" of New York. Theirs was a totally unique and thunderously thought-provoking piece and received a well-deserved standing ovation.

The workshops were just as satisfying and of the best kind. There were instructions on better costuming, better head, body and hands, quick puppets, model theatre crafts and many others, touching almost every item of the vast catalogue of puppetry. Oscar the Grouch (of Sesame Street) made a smashing appearance, and a moving production of "Rip van Winkle" by the Melikin Puppeteers were two other top-notch performances.

Among the pot-pourri numbers, Michael Pollard was outstanding with his "Red, Yellow and Blue". Other polished performances included "Journey of a Raindrop", a beautiful shadow play by the University of Connecticut Drama Department, and also Mrs. Grace Morgan from F.A.O., Schwarz, and her "Crazy Chicken".

The Annual Festival Store housed a variety of items, ranging from a second-hand Minnie Mouse (Pelham Puppet) to a complete cast of "The Wizard of Oz" to a fantastic assortment of characters created by a long dead puppeteer. He was a master craftsman and this was shown in his puppets. Also a splendid collection of books on puppetry and related subjects was available.

This year's festival, also in August, is in Nashville, Tennessee, and, unlike previous festivals, this one will be extended for two weeks. The first week will be one of varied and daily workshops and the following week will include public performances and workshops. It sounds exciting, but it will take quite a bit to top the one in Connecticut, which made page headlines in the *New York Times*!

One particular item to note in attending any P. of A Festival, is the Puppet Exhibition here is a real source of knowledge, encouragement and total surprise. Festival '70 displayed a magnificent Don Quixote, over six feet high and a superbly constructed rod puppet. Frank Ballard, who directed "Love for Three Oranges", had a beautiful cast of marionettes from Boris Gounodov to Samson of Biblical fame, to a Rhine Maiden and Dwarf from "Das Rhinegold".

The festivals are well worth visiting and for interested puppeteers, also anyone interested in joining (foreign puppeteers are also cordially welcomed) here is the address:—

Miss Olga Stevens, Executive Secretary, The Puppeteers of America, Ojai, California, U.S.A.

Good luck to all of you and even if in spirit, if not in body, see you at the Festival!

DAN TAMULONIS,

Pelpups Write

MARGARET TULLEY.—For the past two years our school (Theale G.S.) has has an arts festival which takes the form of an inter-house competition. There are several sections, one of them (only introduced this year) is called "Happenings". It is for entries such as puppets and films. At first I was going to do a satire on "Newspeak", but although it might have worked for humans it was not suitable for puppets, as humans would have pulled it off better. So after seeing those marvellous puppets on the "Royal Variety Performance" I decided to use something which had

not necessarily a plot, but which would show off the abilities and possibilities of puppets. I thought of using your Skeleton as part of the programme acting to "Cool Boy" from "West Side Story". I think it ought to be a few acts, not adding up to more than ten minutes altogether.

TIM WALLACE, RT. 2, BOX 87, MONTICELLO, ARKANSAS, U.S.A.—May I make a suggestion? If any Pelpups are going to get a tape recorder I suggest a cassette recorder because if the tape runs out you don't have to do all the manoeuvring with the tape. You just turn the cassette over.

MARTIN ISLES.—. . . This brings me to a new idea I have had which I shall try out at a fete I am going to in June, namely to take photographs of children with the puppets and give the profits to the fete.

C. READING.—On Saturday I gave a show at a children's party and it was very successful—we were paid £1. It was to about eleven eight-year-olds and they enjoyed it immensely, as did we, the show having lasted about half an hour. There were seven items in the programme and the most successful was—inevitably—the Skeleton and Witch miming to the Bob Hope record "Home Cooking", the Witch stirring a cauldron. The other acts were "Die Liechtenstein Polka" to which Prof. Popkiss drank a glass of foaming beer, attired in a little waistcoat and a hat complete with its Gamsbard. Also in this piece was my Old Lady carrying a tray of beer and my Young Couple singing and waltzing. The record itself is from Liechtenstein and besides the aforementioned there are other suitable tunes for adaptation to the puppet stage. Some other of my items wer Chu-Chi race, from Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, to which my Cow and Bull mimed, and a piece of Chopin to which my Ostrich danced. I have recently replaced its own feathers with ostrich plumes and sequins. In my show I have tried not to have just a sequence of puppets jigging away to any old record, but to do turns which have some point. I dare say that this would not matter with the very young but children at an older age would soon get bored if all the items in the programme were of the previous style. I think that if the puppeteers thought what they would like to see—within reason—in a show then the final product might be better, though, of course, the age of the children has to be also considered.

BILL MOLINA, 4928 WIMMER AVENUE, BALDWIN PARK, CALIFORNIA, U.S.A.—I do enjoy entertaining children through various puppet shows of my own. Only recently I have begun filming a small motion picture which stars many of your characters, to show to children next Hallow'een as a special treat. I wrote the complete script myself, manipulate most of the marionettes and will supply a few of the voices. My younger brothers and sisters are very active in assisting me. Also my cousin runs the camera for me. I feel your puppets will create a successful show because they have a magic all their own. Later, as my movie progresses, I hope to send you snapshots of my results.

ANNE MARIE BEVAN, DUBLIN, EIRE.—My puppet group, "The Four Puppeteers", recently held a show for a Sale of Work in a school in Dublin. We made £12.35 and have been asked to come back again next year. I am very happy that we did so well as puppets aren't very popular yet in Ireland.

DAVID BURGESS.—I am enclosing the programme which I obtained by visiting the Caricature Theatre, Cardiff, at Christmas time. It was an excellent performance and I enjoyed every single minute of it. Jane Phillips invited me backstage after the performance but, unfortunately, time and my train was against me and so I could not go there.

MARK DILLON.—I am writing to say that I put a string on my puppet's stomach to make it do tricks and other things. I also put strings on Gretel's plaits so she could wave them about if she sees a ghost in plays.

RUSTY WORNOM, P.O. BOX 82, HAMPTON, VA., U.S.A.—I am busy right now making a Barnabas Collins marionette out of an old "Mike Mercury'. Barnabas Collins is the starring character in one of America's most popular shows, "Dark Shadows".

DOUG DAVIDSON, P.O. BOX 917, KIRKSVILLE MO., U.S.A.—The Kirkmo Puppeteers—we have sixteen marionettes now and the number is still growing. We have had great success with Schwarz. We have ordered four puppets from them so far. We had a very busy 1970 Christmas season, eight shows within two weeks. My personal interest in puppetry is always growing. I have convinced our Library to buy four new books on the subject. I have noticed now that

I look at things through the eyes of a puppeteer—always seeing if something would fit in, or if I could use it in a play. Puppetry for me has been very rewarding.

GLEN GIBBS.—I have discovered a good way to make a sand storm, a gust of wind, a puff of smoke, etc. All you have to do is take a talcum powder tin and open the holes slightly and then turn on one of those mini-fans. They are best because they make less noise and let the powder drop down in front so that it blows across the stage. This could be adapted for snow. Be careful you don't use bleach—or you might lose an audience!

N. THOMAS.—Recently I have been doing a few party shows for £1. I have another coming up on Tuesday. At school we did a fifteen-minute performance at three of the Christmas parties. At Christmas my sister bought me a Pirate from your range, and I'm using him in our Summer Spectacular. He is one of the stars in my play "Robinson Crusoe". The show will probably go out in April or May. It will be in the evening and lasting about one hour. I've found a particularly good tune for the Frog, "Happiness" by Ken Dodd (I'm one of his fans). If you would like to try it, it is on the Columbia label (E.M.I.) No. DB. 7325. I was wondering if you would need a licence for a large show at school, it is open to parents and anybody else who would like to come? Would I need one for the records? While reading Pelpup News No. 17 I noticed in A. Harper's play, "Uproar at the Hotel", that puppets walk through doors. This is impossible so why did he win?

DAVID WILLIS.—Through recent meetings of my Puppet Club, we are getting nearer and nearer the target of presenting our first plays (these consist of two from Jan Bussell's book of twelve plays for puppets, the first one being "The Bank Robbery" and the second "The Blackberry Expedition"). The other two are both from your fabulous "Pelpup News". They are "Light Headed and Hearted" by Martin Isles from Magazine No. 18, and "The Girl Who Learned a Lesson" by Christopher Reich from No. 13. For Christmas I received your super Mother Dragon and I think she is really good. I greatly like the idea of an elastic band connected to a loop of brass for the mouth and wings.

PENELOPE BRETT.—So much has happened since I last wrote to you, e.g. my partner and I were asked to do a show for seventy children aged 4 to 10. We did a show called "Hoppity met Santa". I was in my school pantomine not so long ago and our producer was Gareth Thomas who has been on TV. When I told him about my actors he told me he worked with "The Pilgrims' Progress".

HELEN CHAMBERS.—We have made some guitars from the pattern in your magazine and have found that a flat lollipop stick in the handle of the guitar makes it more firm and to cut the shape of the guitar out of a sheet of plastic foam makes a better lining.

JOHN TIPTON.—I used my big stage which by luck exactly fits into the dividing area between the lounge and sun lounge with a curtain above the stage to hide the puppeteers. The show consisted of "Caterpillar Capers", "Puppet on a String" (a record turn, also "Lonely Pup in a Christmas Shop") with Cinderella to finish. The whole thing was tape recorded on to a stereophonic recorder most ingeniously so that if a puppet was standing on the right side of the stage the speech of that puppet would come from the right loudspeaker and vice-versa. The show was our most successful yet. The theme music for Cinderella came from the Henry VIII suite from the well-known B.B.C. television programme, which was also in stereo. I am sure many other members would be interested in experimenting with stereo, which is quickly becoming more widely used.

MARTIN SMITH.—I am writing to you after having a successful show today. We presented Pinocchio and I wrote the script. My friend, Peter Capaldi, who is also a Pelpup, produced marvellous scenery. To help us do this show we needed more people and so we auditioned for them. Many of our friends came to the auditions and I am glad to say that everybody who came passed. We had hard work to do as we only had three months to produce this show, but after all the heartbreaking times we managed to produce a great show. We did this show at a Home in Glasgow for Infirm Children. There were all kinds of children there, they liked it very much and they were clapping and singing merrily along with the puppets. One little boy was so excited that he came up and tried to pull Supy's hair out! We had most of the puppets we have along with us and we managed not to get any of them tangled. The music we had was from the Walt Disney record of Pinocchio and some of the songs we used were very effective. Another record

we had was "The Hall of the Mountain King", which was very effective for the scene where Pinocchio was inside the whale's stomach. For our Summer Show we are putting on "The Butterfly Boy". We have put in music, songs, etc., so as to stretch it out a bit, as it is a little bit short. We got this play from the Pelham Puppet Book of Twelve Plays and I think this will be a great success—I hope it will be.

Y. SWINGLER.—As you may know I have formed a puppet club. There are four of us—myself, two other puppeteers and a friend who does the effects and operates the lights and record player. Between us we have twenty Pelham Puppets. We have done two shows so far. One was at the end of October and was very successful. For lighting we used a clip-on inspection lamp and fairy lights (the fairy lights were stuck all round the stage with electrical tape). The most popular act was the Wicked Witch dancing and then saying the poem "A Wicked Witch" (Pelpup News No. 19). After that she did another short dance and disappeared with a puff of talcum powder. We just had the fairy lights which gave a rather eerie atmosphere and she danced round a cauldron. I made a Father Christmas puppet for the show and I thought other Pelpups would like to know how I made it. I made a Father Christmas body as if it was a doll and put weights in the boots (I stuffed it with oddments of material and put a piece of wood inside the jacket). As it was near Christmas I bought a Father Christmas head which was really a Christmas tree decoration. I attached this to the body and then strung him like a Pelham standard puppet. He was as big as my King puppet. If there are any other Pelpups living in our area they are very welcome to join our Club, or if they have a club we would like to become members if possible. Address: 66 Derwent Drive, Kings Heath, Northampton.

KAY NAGUIN, WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII would like to know if there are any Pelpups on the island of Maui.

The following would like to hear from any other Pelpups living in their area:—

ANN WALTON, 193 Kenton Road, Gosforth, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

LOUISE GODWIN, 18 Myddelton Park, London, N.20.

ELIZABETH MCCORMICK, 3 Hillcrest Road, Stratford, New Jersey, U.S.A.

GARY LOWMAN, 22 Chatsworth Gardens, West Harrow, Middlesex.

LOUISE UDALE, Wolsey Cottage, 4 Lower Teddington Road, Hampton Wick, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey. Louise would also like an Australian, Canadian or Irish pen friend, aged 10-11.

BEVERLEY WALSH, 143 Clos des Sables, St. Brelade, Jersey, C.I.

JUDITH GREENACRE, 260 Birchfield Road, Redditch, Worcs.

The following is a list of Pelpups who would like pen friends:-

STEVE TAYLOR, 5125 College Gardens Ct., San Diego, California, U.S.A., a boy from U.S.A. age 10-13—hobbies: puppetry, art, ventriloquism and making puppets.

KAREN LINEHAM, 20 Hawthorne St., Watertown, Mass., U.S.A., a girl from anywhere speaking English—hobbies: swimming, stamps, puppets, cooking, sewing and art.

MARTIN HAIGH, 39 Hatherall Road, Maidstone, Kent, a boy who can read and write English, age 12-13—hobbies: reading, stamp collecting, model railways.

DAWN KEITH, 7 Moncrieff Drive, Rexdale, Ontario, Canada, a girl from anywhere—hobbies: puppets, swimming, stamp collecting, ventriloquism.

ELIZABETH CARTER, 39 Woodland Way, Morden, Surrey, from any part of the world, especially Africa, Turkey, China, Iceland and Russia writing English, age 10-12—hobbies: dancing, Yoga, gymnastics, acrobatics, swimming, stamp collecting and drawing.

MARGARET GILL, 49 Woodland Way, Morden, Surrey, from Australia, New Zealand or Spain, aged 10-12—hobbies: ice skating, hockey, netball, swimming and Girl Guides.

LINDA EDWARDS, 36 Oak Road, Desford, Leicester, a pen friend aged 9-10, speaking and writing English—hobbies: swimming, writing, puppetry.

ELIZABETH HICKS, Fernside, 54 Whitley Road, Hoddesdon, Herts., a girl aged about 8—hobbies: horse riding and all animals, swimming and nature study.

SANDRA FULLERTON, 224 Iola Avenue, Glenshaw, Pennsylvania, U.S.A., boy or girl anywhere in the world aged 12-13—hobbies: swimming, boating, drawing, water ski-ing and puppets.

JANIS WHEAL, 64 Audscroft Road, Rainham, Gillingham, Kent, a girl aged 11 from anywhere in the British Isles—hobbies: reading, sewing and puppetry.

JOCELY TRUSSWELL, 255 High Lane East, West Hallam, Derbyshire, a girl aged 12-13, speaking and writing English—hobbies: cycling, swimming and reading.

WENDY SKAN, 177 Chester Rd., Streetly, Sutton Coldfield, Warks., a girl aged 11, interested in puppets, sewing, music, drawing and reading, from France.

PETER BALLARD, Crimbles, Housman Road, Street, Somerset, a friend in France interested in botany, puppetry and swimming.

IRENE INSKIP, Ebbor House, Wookey Hole, Nr. Wells, Somerset, a friend in India, Canada, America, China or Australia, 9-11—hobbies: reading, swimming, skating and puppetry.

JANICE JACKS, 3 Malpas Road, Chadwell-St.-Mary, Grays, Essex, from anywhere other than France and Italy writing and speaking English, aged 12-13—hobbies: sewing, drawing and puppetry.

SUSAN LEWIS-BARND, Greystones, Long Hanborough, Oxon., a friend aged 8-9, interested in animals, music and puppets, in England.

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